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Henry, Patricia, and Judith Evans: The Peregrine Press
and the Porpoise Bookshop: Part II
by John Crichton



Review: Johann Gensfleisch, Known as Gutenberg
by Bruce Whiteman

Southern California Sightings
by Carolee Campbell

Ward Ritchie: An Appreciation
by Edward R. Bosley III

A Bookman's Farewell
by Bo Wreden

Book Collector Extraordinaire
by Kathleen Rydar



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Henry, Patricia, and Judith Evans: The Peregrine Press and the Porpoise Bookshop: Part 2

by John Crichton*

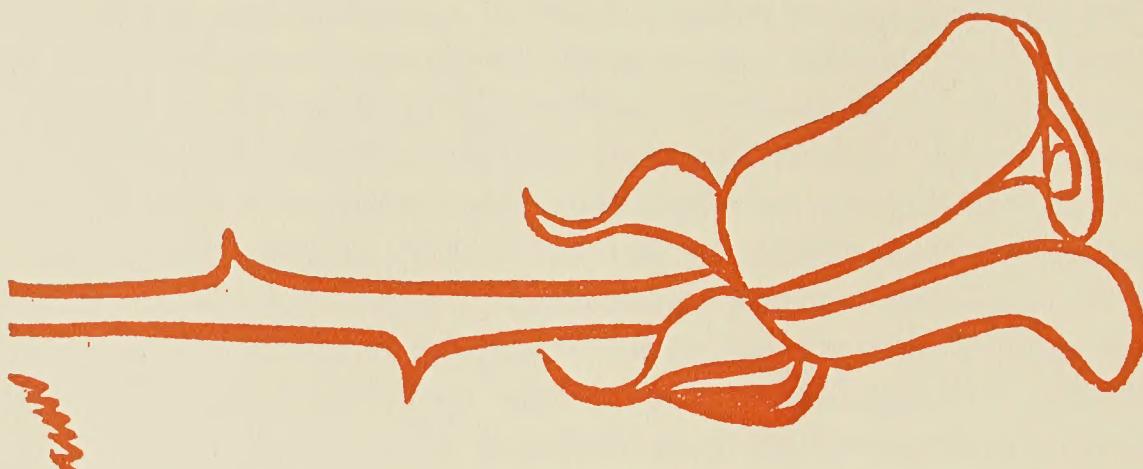
The Porpoise Bookshop, which opened its doors in 1953 in the heart of downtown San Francisco, was one of the most unusual bookshops that San Francisco had ever seen.

Like its predecessor, H.H. Evans Books, it was financially successful; indeed for years it was the primary source of support for the Peregrine Press. And it was a productive time for its proprietors Henry, Patricia, and Judith Evans. The threesome operated the open bookshop; they hosted exhibitions featuring numerous artists, both living and deceased (though they preferred the living); they issued catalogs of old and rare books; they wrote, illustrated, and published numerous booklets of children's rhymes and essays on San Francisco local history; they inaugurated several new series of publications under the imprint of the Porpoise Bookshop; they printed and promoted the books and broadsides of the Peregrine Press; and they solicited subscribers to support their publications.

During the first three years of the press, its sole contributors were Henry and Patricia as authors, illustrators, and printers, with increasing help from Judith. Just before the opening of the new shop downtown, this dynamic began to change. In 1952 Henry engaged reclusive Bay Area artist Edward Hagedorn to produce a portfolio of etchings, entitled *Ten Nudes*. This marked the beginning of artistic collaborations that would expand to include more than twenty artists over the next ten years, including such names as Robert Quick, Mark Luca, Robert

*John Crichton is proprietor of the Brick Row Book Shop in San Francisco, and past president of the Book Club of California. Part 1 of this article was published in the *Quarterly News-Letter*, vol. 80, no. 1, Winter 2015.

The Book Club of California



Rose from *Specimen Sheet and Price List of the World's Finest Printing Inks*, the Peregrine Press, 1957.

La Vigne, Mel Fowler, Leonard Baskin, Mary Fabilli, Rick Barton, William La Grille, Ivan Majdrakoff, and Fielding Dawson. The artwork was almost entirely in linoleum and wood blocks, Henry's preferred medium; it was all original art that introduced mostly new artists to the art and book world, showcasing work that very likely would not have been supported elsewhere. These collaborations would become the signature achievement of Henry Evans as a printer and the Porpoise Bookshop as a publisher.

Hagedorn's *Ten Nudes* was followed by Kenneth Rexroth's translation of *Fourteen Poems* by O. V. de L. Milosz, also illustrated by Hagedorn. This was the first example of a Peregrine Press publication that featured the work of a writer other than Henry or Patricia, thus marking the beginning of their use of outside literary contributions. From Milosz and Rexroth, the list of literary contributors quickly grew to include Robert Duncan, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Jess Collins, Kenneth Patchen, Tram Combs, Robert Creeley, and Gary Snyder. Between the years 1953 and 1956, original works by these poets and others, paired with the original works of art, appeared in twelve magazine-like anthologies entitled *Poems & Pictures*, a series edited by Henry and printed at the Peregrine Press in various formats.

Other literary and artistic projects were regularly being planned or produced at any given moment. In late 1953 Henry wrote a fine essay in praise of printer and letter-founder John Baskerville entitled *John Baskerville, The Gracious Infidel*. The pamphlet includes an original leaf from Baskerville's edition of *The Works of Mr. William Congreve*. In early 1954 Patricia began compiling her series of booklets of children's rhymes: *Hopscotch*; *Jump Rope Rhymes*; *Sticks and Stones*; *Who's It?*; and *Jacks*. These titles and a few others were published in an inexpensive small booklet format that Henry had devised to use for the Porpoise

Quarterly News-Letter



FIELDING DAWSON, title page for "If You" by Robert Creeley, *Poems & Pictures Number Eight*, the Porpoise Bookshop, San Francisco, 1956.

Bookshop antiquarian book catalogs. He would continue to use this format most notably for his three essays on local history: *Bohemian San Francisco*; *Curious Lore of San Francisco's Chinatown*; and *San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf*. These 32-page booklets were printed offset and sold for 25 cents apiece. All together ten were published; they remained in print into the early 1960s, and they are as entertaining and readable today as they were fifty years ago.

The first six catalogs of the Porpoise Bookshop, issued between 1953 and 1955, consisted of offerings of almost entirely antiquarian books and first editions, with announcements of the Porpoise Bookshop and Peregrine Press publications. *Catalog Seven*, issued at the beginning of 1955, was dedicated solely to "Our Own Publications." A few subsequent catalogs contained some antiquarian books, but in January 1956, the Porpoise Bookshop issued its last catalog to offer old and rare books: *Catalog Fourteen, Herodotus to Hölderlin*. From this point forward, all the catalogs from the shop — most of which were printed letterpress in attractive broadsides and French-fold pamphlet format with linoleum block prints by Patricia — were lists and announcements of Porpoise Bookshop publications. But in lieu of sufficient subscribers, the Bookshop still needed the trade in old and rare books to keep afloat. In late 1953 Henry wrote to Richard Archer at the William Andrews Clark Library, thanking him for the library's support and expressing

The Book Club of California

frustration at his search for subscribers: "The Clark is the only library which has subscribed, and of all the subscriptions I solicited, only six came through. I cannot print books on the strength of six subscribers." Henry's efforts to round up subscribers would not be entirely in vain: by 1954 the number had increased to fifteen.

In early 1955 the Evanses closed the Porpoise Bookshop downtown and moved it to a street level location at 308 Clement Street, between Fourth and Fifth Avenue in the Richmond District. The famous Monkey Block building on Montgomery Street, which had been home to the shop and gallery for two years, was destined for demolition, to ultimately make way for the Transamerica Pyramid. The Clement Street location gave the Evanses a single venue for the printing press, the gallery, and the bookshop, with windows on the street for display — and it was within a couple of blocks of their Second Avenue home. It was also comfortably off the beaten path, which clearly appealed to Henry's independent nature. He remained uncomfortable with organizations and clubs, such as the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of America and the Book Club of California, two groups with which he shared innumerable interests but never joined. In 1957 Henry finally ceded to the urgings of a few printer friends and became a member of the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, but it did not agree with him, and he was a member for only two years.

A checklist of Porpoise Bookshop publications in 1956 contains over thirty titles, including a newly issued *Peregrine Press Sampler*, an inexpensive loose portfolio of examples from the press intended to promote its work and encourage subscriptions. Elaborating on their philosophy in the *Sampler*'s prospectus, the publishers state: "The authors and artists we publish are alive. Content is contemporary. Ideas do not frighten us. We are eager and willing to consider manuscripts in the following fields: poetry, bibliography, folklore, cookery and typography. We are particularly anxious to see examples of the work of artists who are cutting or engraving in linoleum or wood The Peregrine Press is in effect a continuing experiment in contemporary printing and typography Since we do no commercial work we are beholden to no one and print only what we believe is really worth printing." Unfortunately, one book worth printing did frighten Henry. In October of 1955, Allen Ginsberg read his soon-to-be famous poem *Howl* at the Six Gallery in San Francisco. The Porpoise Bookshop had become well-known in local literary circles for its *Poems & Pictures* series, and as Henry later related in an unpublished memoir, Ginsberg approached him about publishing *Howl* in a similar manner. Henry reluctantly declined, for reasons

Quarterly News-Letter

he did not explain to Ginsberg, and referred him instead to Lawrence Ferlinghetti. The unstated reason for the rejection could only have been that Henry's five-year probation for sending obscene material through the mail in 1950 as the proprietor of H.H. Evans Books* had just ended; publishing *Howl* would probably have gotten him into costly trouble once again, and possibly landed him in jail.

In 1957, the Shop issued a small broadside prospectus with the title "An Ambitious Project." The next year, it stated, would "mark the tenth year of the Peregrine Press. It will also be the year in which our *Poems and Pictures* series will be completed But in this year, with an eye to the real world, and probing the future, we will commence a new series: *Peregrine Print Portfolios*. Twelve portfolios of prints, each containing the new, hitherto unpublished work of a LIVING artist . . . a young master of our own inescapable times" This ambitious project and others like it would constitute the primary publications program of the Porpoise Bookshop over the next six years. The portfolios were issued in Japanese paper wrappers or a similar heavy handmade paper, with a simple title or the artist's name printed on the upper wrapper. They were typically comprised of a title leaf, colophon leaf, and 12 to 20 loose prints, in editions limited to between 75 and 125 copies. Each portfolio was the work of one artist and was usually dedicated to a single subject, e.g., fish, cats, birds, chairs, churches, flowers, musical instruments, boats, hand presses, saints, etc. They featured many of the artists mentioned above, but there were three with whom Henry had established a close relationship and would work with most often: Robert Quick, Mel Fowler, and Rick Barton. Robert Quick was a severely disabled artist whom Henry encouraged, perhaps when others would not, and he produced fine, striking linoleum block prints for the three Porpoise Bookshop portfolios *Birds*, *Cats*, and *Fish*. The *Fish* portfolio was the first use by the Peregrine Press of the four-color format, which Henry would later masterfully employ with his botanical prints. Mel Fowler was a well-established painter and sculptor with whom Henry had a long, fascinating, and revelatory correspondence (now at the Clark Library). And Rick Barton, a San Francisco artist who associated with the Beats of North Beach, was the single most prolific artistic contributor to Porpoise Bookshop publications. Although Barton was known as a legendarily difficult and complicated personality, Henry was supportive and managed to get a wealth of interesting linoleum and wood block work from him. Among Barton's numerous idiosyncrasies was

*Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, as explained in part 1 of this article (Winter 2015 QN-L).

The Book Club of California



MEL FLOWERS, from *A Portfolio of Nudes*, the Porpoise Bookshop, San Francisco, 1957.

his steadfast refusal to cut his blocks in reverse, the result of which was that his printed images always appeared in reverse. The lion's share of Barton's artistic output that survives was produced under the imprint of the Porpoise Bookshop.

The year 1957 saw another important transition for the Porpoise Bookshop: the threesome of Henry, Patricia, and Judith became a two-some when Judith went off to college. Judith had become an important contributor in running the shop, setting type for the Peregrine Press, and assisting her mother in compiling rhymes, among many other ac-

Quarterly News-Letter

tivities. Henry wrote to Richard Archer that her absence had “left the firm a little unbalanced.” Judith would return from time to time over the years, and she set the type for at least two more books for the press, but she was gone for good as a regular presence.

The following year, 1958, Henry signed one of his own linoleum block prints for the first time. He had been working closely with the art form for almost a decade, printing blocks by other artists, during which time he had quietly experimented with his own printmaking. Now he was finally declaring himself a printmaker as well. This was a notable foreshadowing: within a few years Henry would combine his acquired skill as a printmaker with his long-held interest in botany.

In the late 1950s, the Porpoise Bookshop adopted a new motto, “Per Mano Con Amore,” and dedicated itself almost exclusively to producing artists’ portfolios. Other than the printed wrappers, title and colophon leaves, and occasional captions, very little letterpress was involved, and traditional bindings were never used. The Porpoise Bookshop continued to have a room for old and rare books, but increasingly it was a gallery for prints, both by Henry and other artists he was publishing. Maintaining the inventory of antiquarian books was no longer a priority, and within a few years it would all be sold off. But it still had the feel of a bookshop, as Richard Dillon noted in 1961 in his pamphlet, *The Bay Area Bookman*: “The Porpoise Bookshop is quite a haul from downtown, but well worth the trip. Not only is bearded H.H. Evans an interesting person with a fund of knowledge and opinion on matters bookish, but he is also proprietor of the Peregrine Press and will be glad to discuss printing, authorship, etc., around the old hand press itself.”

Though Henry was by personality not a self-promoter, in 1959 the efforts of the Evanses, the Porpoise Bookshop, and the Peregrine Press were honored at UC Berkeley with an exhibition of their work at the General Library. It celebrated “Nine years of Evans family fun and work,” and the exhibit was reviewed in the Book Club’s *Quarterly News-Letter*, which described the Peregrine Press as being “primarily interested in original creative work. In addition, most of its productions have been sold to meet the cost of printing, and little more.”

Between 1961 and 1963 the Bookshop published seven artists’ portfolios and two bound books. The penultimate book was an exceptional one, *A Modern Herbal*, a long-planned botanical about San Francisco Bay Area herbs, written by Patricia in the manner of her earlier work on mushrooms, illustrated by Rick Barton, typeset by Judith and printed by Henry. *A Modern Herbal* was the last of the Evans family’s many

The Book Club of California

collaborations. Judith was soon to graduate from UC Berkeley and be on her way east, and Henry and Patricia's marriage ended in divorce in 1962, leaving the Porpoise Bookshop and Peregrine Press solely in Henry's hands. For the next two years Henry worked alone at the Porpoise Bookshop on Clement Street, concentrating on his printmaking and the production of additional artists' portfolios, which increasingly featured his botanical prints.

In 1963 Henry wrote to Richard Archer, "Am doing quite a bit of hiking and some camping; get to see the plants that way. Am quite unsettled about my plans for the future. Would like to pull up stakes and do some botanical studies in some other country . . ." In August of 1964 Henry told his friend Roger Levenson that all the books were sold and he was now officially Henry Evans, Printmaker. The Porpoise Bookshop, like H.H. Evans books before it, was no more, and there would be no more Peregrine Press imprints of any kind.

In 1960 Henry reflected on the Peregrine Press: "In 1949 my wish of a lifetime was fulfilled: the establishment of a private hand press based on two precepts. My first rule was that there be no reprints — in other words all of the material had to be new and hitherto unpublished, The second rule was that there were to be no commercial printing jobs done. I have stuck with these two rules and I am glad I did. In my own typographical development I have been influenced by the works of a number of printers . . . but it should be clear to anyone who has seen any of the products of the Peregrine Press that mechanical perfection has never in itself been one of my goals. In order of importance I have always rated content first, design second, and mechanical achievement third. I feel there is a great need to recognize the creative efforts of our contemporaries, no matter how terrifying, or confusing or depressing they may be. Poets and artists who are capable and willing to portray the world around them should be encouraged. They should be brought into print in the best and most luxurious possible format. This I believe and with this in mind the Peregrine Press will be continued."

The Peregrine Press would in fact not continue much longer, but Henry Evans stayed on at 308 Clement Street for another year after the closure of the press and the shop, working on his prints and displaying them for sale in the windows. He would eventually become widely recognized and celebrated as a botanical printmaker. Several years after declaring himself solely a printmaker, Henry met and married another printmaker, Marsha Onomiya. Henry died in 1990. Marsha Onomiya Evans lives today in St. Helena.

Quarterly News-Letter

Judith Evans received a degree in Librarianship from UC Berkeley in 1962, and appropriately she was the first historian and bibliographer of the Peregrine Press. Her paper for Librarianship 211 was "The Peregrine Press, 1949-1962, With a Bibliography of its Books, Portfolios and Pamphlets." After graduation Judith went to work for the New York Public Library; she later married Gershon Legman and moved to southern France, where she lives today.

Within a few years of her divorce from Henry, Patricia Evans married the librarian and printer Kenneth J. Carpenter and moved to Reno, Nevada, where she helped him in 1964 to establish the Black Rock Press at the University of Nevada. In 1962 Doubleday brought together Patricia's five booklets of rhymes for children under the title *Rimbles: A Book of Children's Classic Games, Rhymes, Songs and Sayings By Patricia Evans*. Patricia died in 1988.

Over the years, the Peregrine Press acquired several presses other than the 1852 Washington iron press that Henry had purchased in 1949 and which was such an important part of the story of the Peregrine Press. The original 1852 Washington iron press, however, continued to be the favorite. It now resides at the University of San Francisco.

During its fifteen-year history, the Peregrine Press remained steadfastly true to the credo and ideals that Henry Evans had expressed, in one form or another, throughout its lifetime — ideals originally set forth in the broadside *Why Peregrine?* Evans established a bookshop and small-press publishing enterprise that would become a prototype for many who would follow the same dream of owning a bookshop that simultaneously served as a small-press publisher and fine-press printer. And in the process he left an extraordinarily rich and unusual legacy, one that deserves a place in the annals of bookselling, publishing, and fine-press printing in San Francisco.



AN OPEN BOOK from *Specimen Sheet and Price List of the World's Finest Printing Inks*, the Peregrine Press, 1957.

The Book Club of California

CHECKLIST

of the Peregrine Press and Porpoise Bookshop publications, 1948-1963

EVANS, HENRY HERMAN. *A Guide to Rare Books: Compiled by H.H. Evans*. The Porpoise Bookshop, MCMCLVIII [i.e. 1958 for 1948]. 1500 copies printed by Haywood Hunt.

EVANS, HENRY. *Why Peregrine?* The Peregrine Press, undated but 1949-50. Broadside proclamation. Limitation not stated.

SANDBURG, CARL. *Ever Normal Turmoil*. The Peregrine Press, 1950. Broadside. 200 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *A Contribution Towards a Check List of Bibliographies and Reference Material Relating to the History of the States and Territories of the American West*. The Peregrine Press, 1950. 75 copies printed.

Lines of Tribute from L.R. Baskerville to Federico Garcia Lorca. The Peregrine Press, 1950. Broadside poem. 25 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY and PATRICIA HEALY EVANS. *First Duet*. The Peregrine Press, 1950. 84 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *The First Signature Seven Sonnets: An Occasional Magazine Devoted to the Traditional Sonnet*. The Peregrine Press, 1950. 100 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *Western Bibliographies*. The Peregrine Press, 1951. 122 copies printed.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *The Mycophagists' Book (Mushroom Cookery)*. The Peregrine Press, 1951. 175 copies printed.

Three Talks about Books by Bookmen. San Francisco Public Library. Officina Peregrinis, 1951. Broadside announcement. Limitation not stated.

EVANS, HENRY. *Anomalies*. A Poem. Officina Peregrinis, 1952. 100 copies printed.

HAGEDORN, EDWARD. *Ten Nudes*. The Peregrine Press, 1952. 86 copies printed.

MILOSZ, O.V. DE L. *Fourteen Poems by O. V. de L. Milosz*. The Peregrine Press, 1952. 129 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *Campaigns*. Officina Peregrinis, 1952. Broadside poem. 100 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *John Baskerville. The Gracious Infidel*. The Peregrine Press, 1953. 150 copies printed.

Praise for Carl Sandburg from Some of His Friends on the Occasion of His 75th Birthday. The Peregrine Press, 1953. 15 copies printed.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *An Alphabet Book*. The Peregrine Press, 1953. 200 copies printed.

BASKERVILLE, L.R. *Otono-Iberia*. The Peregrine Press, 1954. 50 copies printed.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *Jump Rope Rhymes: Compiled and Illustrated by Patricia Evans*. The Porpoise Bookshop 1954. Trade publication.

PENINOU, ERNEST and SIDNEY GREENLEAF. *Winemaking in California*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1954. Two volumes; volume one 150 copies printed; volume two 250 copies.

Quarterly News-Letter

Poems & Pictures. Number One. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1954. 50 copies printed. There was also a trade issue.

Poems & Pictures. Number Two. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1954. No limitation stated, but there was a deluxe issue and a trade issue.

Juan Pablos Peter Schoeffer William Caslon John Baskerville, William Caxton . . . The Peregrine Press, 1954. Broadside tribute. 100 copies printed.

MONIHAN, WILLIAM JOSEPH, S.J. A Gift to the Richard A. Gleeson Library, University of San Francisco. The Peregrine Press, 1954. 250 copies printed.

CURTIS, JACK. A Pigeon Wing and Nineteen Other Poems. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. 200 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. Bohemian San Francisco. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. Trade publication.

EVANS, PATRICIA. Hopscotch. By Patricia Evans. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. 150 copies printed. There was also a trade issue.

EVANS, HENRY. Curious Lore of San Francisco's Chinatown. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. Trade publication.

Poems & Pictures. Number Three. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. 50 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures. Number Four. San Francisco: The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. 100 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures. Number Five. CURTIS, JACK. *Cool of a Kansas.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. 125 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures. Number Six. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1955. First edition. 50 copies printed.

QUICK, ROBERT. *A Portfolio of Cats.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956.

Poems & Pictures Number Seven. WITT, HAROLD. *Family in the Forest.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. 150 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures Number Eight. CREELEY, ROBERT. *If You.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. 200 copies printed.

DREYKUS, PAUL. *Stone & Pulse.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. 60 copies printed. There was also a trade issue.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *Jacks.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. Trade publication.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *Who's It?* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. Trade publication.

Peregrine Press Sampler. The Peregrine Press, 1956. No limitation.

LUCA, MARK. *Back to the Cave.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1956. 165 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures Number Nine. EVANS, HENRY. *Small New Poems.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1957. 150 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1957. Trade publication.

FLOWER, MEL. *A Portfolio of Nudes.* The Porpoise Bookshop, 1957. 150 copies printed.

Specimen Sheet and Price List of the World's Finest Printing Inks . . . The Peregrine Press, 1957. Broadside announcement. 250 copies printed.

The Book Club of California

QUICK, ROBERT. *A Portfolio of Birds*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. 137 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures. Number Ten. PACKARD, WILLIAM. *The Condition of All Poetry and Other Poems*. Porpoise Bookshop, 1957. 150 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures Number Eleven. McHUGH, VINCENT. *Alpha: The Mutabilities*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. 137 copies printed.

Lines of Tribute to Allan Nevins . . . Peregrine Press, 1958. 31 copies printed.

Poems & Pictures Number Twelve. KLEITMAN, ESTHER. *Poems . . . with pictures by Mel Fowler*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. 120 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Musical Instruments*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. 100 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Chairs*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. 100 copies printed.

GARDNER, JOSEPHINE. *How to Tell a Story*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. Trade publication.

An Early American Recipe for Making Home Brew. The Peregrine Press, 1958. Broadside keepsake. 500 copies printed.

TREN LUN, CRIDORIAN. *Earth Manuscript Discovered by the 16th Cridor Expedition for Intergalactic Exploration. Edited by Tren Lun, Cridorian*. Cridor: At the Press of the Society, 3682. Peregrine Press, no date but circa 1958. 90 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *The Hand Press*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 120 copies printed.

QUICK, ROBERT. *Fish: Six Color-Prints*. Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 100 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Netsukes*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 88 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Man*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 80 copies printed.

LUCA, MARK. *San Francisco, Seven Stages*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 100 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *San Francisco Churches*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 80 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Sausalito Boat Harbor*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1959. 100 copies printed.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *Sticks and Stones*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. Trade publication.

FOWLER, MEL. *The Seven Deadly Sins*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. 100 copies printed.

BASKIN, LEONARD. *Six Portraits*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. 100 copies printed.

FABILLI, MARY. *Saints*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. 100 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Hands and Flowers*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. 80 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Flowers: A First Coloring Book*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1960. 80 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Rooms*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1958. The title page is dated 1958, but the work was not completed and issued until 1960. 60 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *Visions and Memories*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 26 copies printed.

FOWLER, MEL. *Five Italian Proverbs*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 100 copies printed.

Quarterly News-Letter

KARPILOW, SHELLEY. *Sachets & Dry Perfumes*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. Trade publication.

EVANS, PATRICIA. *A Modern Herbal by Patricia Evans*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 165 copies printed.

MAJDRAKEOFF, IVAN. *Heads*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 100 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *Posies and Some Others*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 30 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Sailboats*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1961. 100 copies printed.

BARTON, RICK. *Seven Views of Chichen-Itza*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1962. 75 copies printed.

LA GRILLE, WILLIAM. *Assemblage. Nine Motifs*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1962. 100 copies printed.

JACK, KENNETH. *Australian Gold & Ghost Towns*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1962. 100 copies printed.

EVANS, HENRY. *Flora*. The Porpoise Bookshop, 1962.

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The Book Club of California

Johann Gensfleisch, Known as Gutenberg

by Bruce Whiteman*

A review of Alix Christie's *Gutenberg's Apprentice* (New York: Harper-Collins, 2014. \$27.99.)

The maker of the first western book printed with moveable types, surely *Time's* Man of the Year for 1454 (had there been a *Time* then), the instigator of a revolution in communication and a key player (without his knowledge) in the Reformation and the spread of classical learning, Gutenberg is the perfect subject for an historical novel. He is a crucial figure in world history, yet the surviving evidence of his life, apart from books he printed or helped to print, is slim. We know far less about him than we know about Cicero, say, who lived a millennium and a half earlier, or Gaiseric, the Vandal king who captured Rome almost exactly a thousand years before Gutenberg finished his forty-two-line Bible. A novelist with imagination and extensive reading in the history of Germany in general and Mainz in particular during Gutenberg's day, as well as some experience of letterpress printing, is well placed to tell a story with built-in drama and cultural capital to spare.

Alix Christie learned to print by hand from the owners of the Yolla Bolly Press and she owns a Chandler & Price press made in 1910 on which she prints broadsides and small pamphlets. She has worked primarily as a journalist, and her first novel demonstrates that she knows how to do research. Gutenberg's world is vividly recreated in *Gutenberg's Apprentice*, not just the print shop but the cultural, religious, and sensuous particulars as well. Christie frames the story of the printing of the Bible with a tried and true trick: Peter Schoeffer, the apprentice of the book's title, meets periodically in 1485 and 1486 with the Benedictine monk and writer Johannes Trithemius at Sponheim Abbey to tell his version of the events in Mainz that led to the creation of that famous first book. You can almost see the dissolve in the movie version, as he begins to speak and we are taken back to the 1450s. Now and again his narrative is broken by a return to Sponheim Abbey, as Trithemius and Schoeffer natter on about God's role in bringing the Gutenberg Bible to fruition and about whether Johannes Gutenberg was a self-centered mean-spirited genius or a self-centered mean-spirited exploiter of men and other men's money. Of course no one has the vaguest idea about

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Quarterly News-Letter

what sort of man Gutenberg actually was; but in the end, our narrator and his interlocutor — and by extension the author too — seem to agree that he was both.

The narrative follows the printing of the Bible quire by quire, with time off to explore the politics of Mainz, the prestidigitations of the Master as he negotiates the complex forces that impinge on his invention, the progress of a love affair between Peter Schoeffer and his girlfriend Anna (love comes a cropper, love is found anew, etc.), and occasionally to check back in with our narrator and his patient listener. Christie is a good storyteller, and she gets most of the details pretty much right. Her writing is sometimes a little too flowery (she loves similes) and sometimes a little too, well, grave. Perhaps the principals involved in printing the Bible really did believe that their role on the world stage was selected for them by God, but here they tell us a few times too many perhaps. They were craftsmen, and whether pious or not (they probably were), would surely have had a certain down-to-earth view of their work too. It's hard to imagine a compositor, even a smart and inventive one like Peter Schoeffer, thinking of "the vision of God's City that Saint Augustine described" when he gazes on Gutenberg's *officina*. The forces ranged against them — archbishops out more for cash than elevation to heaven, moneylenders insouciant of the great work that the Bible represents — also don't finally seem that horrible, really, compared to the Slough of Despond or the Fire Swamp or the Temple of Ordeal.

Christie has some difficulty keeping the language and the references properly anchored in the fifteenth century. No one would have called an upset child a "chickadee" in 1450s Germany, as Peter Schoeffer does at one point. There are no chickadees in the Old World. The risqué evocation of very twentieth-century jokes (compositors "do it" with sensitive fingers, only two things in the world smell like fish, etc.) feels wrong too, while expressions like "cool it" and "shut your gob" sound off-key. More seriously for printing verisimilitude, Christie incorrectly has Schoeffer's girlfriend Anna bring him "block books she collected for the pictures," especially ones they read for "their message of salvation," in 1452. Most scholars now agree that block books are largely a phenomenon of the 1460s, and the specific text being referred to here, the *Speculum salvationis humanae*, probably dates to the late 1460s or the 1470s. Schoeffer at one point, needing money, offers his services as a scribe to one Petrus Heilant, and they agree that he will write out three copies — three! — of Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*. The *Summa* comprises over three thousand pages, so this seems like a bit much to

The Book Club of California

accomplish at a time when Schoeffer has just embarked on setting the Bible for Gutenberg's edition and is working practically day and night. Finally, one experiences a curious, almost crestfallen feeling when that great Bible is finally finished, as its final quire is printed in a chapter following a scene where Schoeffer and his now betrothed Anna lose their virginity together. It's an odd collocation of events that might better have been separated in the novel a little more widely.

In sum, this is a novel that successfully evokes the world of the incunable — indeed, the first of the incunables — with close attention to detail and a dab hand at creating character where what one is given by the historical record is quite bare. It will doubtless find a large and appreciative audience, and for years to come, most people will think of Christie's Gutenberg when they think about the inventor of printing. It is a fiction, of course, just like the portrait of Gutenberg that serves as a frontispiece for Moxon's *Mechanic Exercises*, the first printer's manual. No one really knew in 1683 what Johannes Gutenberg looked like; whoever drew his picture felt free to invent the details, and the result is fetching if imaginary.

Southern California Sightings by Carolee Campbell*

A two-storied brown shingle-and-brick Craftsman-style bungalow sits amidst a closely manicured lawn, while in front, lining the parkway, stands a row of the ever-so-tall, ever-so-iconic *Washingtonia filifera*, Southern California's answer to much-needed shade trees — the California fan palm. The spacious bungalow is partnered, on the other side of the lawn, by what was originally a carriage house when it was built in 1912 on then-trendy Ocean Boulevard in Long Beach.

The bungalow and carriage house were built for philanthropist Elizabeth Milbank Anderson (1850-1921) on bluffs offering striking views of both Long Beach Harbor and the Port of Long Beach. The Port of Long Beach had just been scratched out of eight hundred acres of mud flats at the mouth of the L.A. River the year before, in 1911.

Elizabeth Milbank Anderson was an art collector and heir to the fortune of her father, financier Jeremiah Milbank. Donating a library to Greenwich, Connecticut and giving three blocks of choice New York

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Quarterly News-Letter

City land to Barnard College were just the tip of her philanthropic iceberg. She built public facilities for the poor, such as a sports arena and public baths, as well as establishing a program of free school lunches.

After Elizabeth's death, her home became Long Beach's first beach club for the social elite, the Club California Casa Real. Pioneer oil industrialist Thomas A. O'Donnell owned it between 1929 and 1944, and during the Second World War it was used by the Navy as the Chief Petty Officers' Club. In 1950, it was purchased by the City for a Municipal Art Center and was renamed in 1957 as the Long Beach Museum of Art.

On November 15, 2014, in that historic setting in the museum's Lane Ocean View Gallery (which indeed had such a remarkable ocean view that all the shades had to be drawn against the light), an audience gathered to hear a presentation about a remarkable three-volume set of books, *Notes for A Lost Play*, by book artist and photographer Jeffrey Atherton. The lecture was co-sponsored by the Long Beach Museum of Art and the California Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers.

This is what Jeffrey Atherton has written about *Notes for A Lost Play*: “The basic text is an account of a fictional play ostensibly written just before the outbreak of World War I and lost until 1992, when a trunk containing fragments (photographs, notations, and commentary) was found. The project is a conceptual reconstruction of this fictional play. The photographs form the narrative core of this imagined play, and the notes and commentary are used as a counterpoint to the suggestions (both manifest and latent) of the images.”

Atherton creates this conceit, then builds around it until it begins to spin like an expanding energy ball of sparks spitting out a universe of players growing like the Fibonacci sequence; fictive players in a play in a book that is then glossed in argument with the text by another imaginary character who is part of the cast.

Atherton began *Notes for A Lost Play* in 1992, spending two years writing the text while serving as Chair of the Photography Department at Art Center College of Design. (He is currently Assistant Professor at California State University, Long Beach.)

Between 1994 and 1996 he printed the text letterpress at the Bieler Press studio in Marina del Rey with proprietor Gerald Lange as tutor. Atherton began by offering the typesetting and printing job to Lange but said that when asked, “Gerald refused to take on the job himself.” As reported by Atherton, the exchange was short:

The Book Club of California

“I’m not going to print it. You print it.”
“I don’t print.”
“I’ll teach you.”

Thus began, between 1994 and 1996, an apprenticeship with one of the finest letterpress printer/teachers in the whole of the West. As a result, *Notes for A Lost Play* is impeccably printed. (The relationship continued on as a collaboration for a second book written by Jeffrey, *Black-letter: an interpretation of events relating to the time and presence of Johann Gutenberg* with photographs by Atherton, published by the Bieler Press in 2000.)

The photographs, selenium-toned silver prints, were completed by Atherton over the course of a year and are installed in two of the three volumes in a manner that allows the prints to “breathe” unattached within their overmats. This method was designed by Daniel E. Kelm, one of the most innovative book artist/designer/binders of our age, at his Wide Awake Garage in Easthampton, Massachusetts. The two volumes that hold the sixty-six photographs and printed text are bound in Kelm’s Modified Wire Edge Binding style. The structure, simple to the eye, belies the ingenious architecture that allows the book to lie perfectly flat when open, no matter its weight. (Having used another complex version of Daniel’s unique Wire Edge Binding style myself in a Ninja Press edition, I understand perfectly both its brilliance and its challenge.)

The two volumes are both 18 x 24 inches and together contain eighty pages. The boards are covered in black Japanese book cloth, vermillion goatskin, and brass. They are housed in modified clamshell boxes with magnetic closures. The third companion volume, *The Commentary*, measures 8½ x 11 inches and consists of forty-one pages. It supplies commentary on the photographs. The edition size is four. Total weight: 100 pounds.

Notes for A Lost Play, in Atherton’s words, “is an attempt to create a complete closed world within the confines of a large, highly refined set of books. The text and the images are intended to engage the reader in a complete fiction. Utilizing the scale and craft of the physical books, the reader is forced into a context removed from the normal activity of viewing photographs or reading text. The text and photographs are each used to create a part of the fiction, thus leaving the usual hierarchy of text to image ambiguous. Readers must find their own relationship to each narrative element.” \$20,000 will allow you to find that relationship to those narrative elements for yourself.

Quarterly News-Letter

SIMON LOXLEY WILL PROBABLY BE KNOWN to many readers of this *News-Letter*, not only as a graphic designer but as an exceedingly witty writer on typography, design, and typographic history.

Consider this from an essay entitled “The Disappearing Possessive Apostrophe” written for *Design Week*, the web-based journal out of the U.K. (January 2007): “The possessive apostrophe has always enjoyed a chequered relationship with its users, largely because many people are uncertain what that use should be. The monotonous sledgehammer teaching methods employed in the past to drive those rules into the heads of at least some schoolchildren have now been abandoned for more pupil-friendly initiatives, so it seems unlikely that the situation will improve. Neither will it if one looks in prominent places where the apostrophe should appear, only to find it is no longer there.” Farther on he writes: “The reason seems clear: as contemporary design searches constantly for the streamlined, the minimized and the uncluttered, the possessive apostrophe merely presents a visual irritant. In a typographical environment where even the mixture of upper and lower case characters in one word can be regarded as visually over-complex, what chance has this embryonic tadpole of a character got?” And still farther: “I’ll nail my colours to the mast here, and say that I like the possessive apostrophe; it clarifies the meaning of the written language, and clarification in a confusing world is always to be applauded Difficult as it may be sometimes to use properly, the possessive apostrophe is nonetheless an endangered species that deserves our protection. And preservation isn’t always easy. But just because pandas are extremely reluctant to reproduce doesn’t mean they shouldn’t be given every encouragement, and so should this helpful little squiggle.” And last: “Perhaps the humble apostrophe simply needs rebranding for the twenty-first century. Let’s think of it as a glyph; that sounds far sexier. Now go out and use it!”

I was charmed by that essay and thus eager to attend the first meeting of L.A.’s Zamorano Club for 2015. Simon Loxley was to be its after-dinner speaker. His subject was one with which he is deeply familiar: the type designer Frederic Warde. Loxley’s book on Warde, *Printer’s Devil: the life and work of Frederic Warde*, covers his short (1894-1939) and previously scantily documented life. Warde has two claims to fame: one being his collaboration with Stanley Morrison in the creation of the typeface Arrighi; and the other being the husband (for a while) to Beatrice Warde of “crystal goblet” fame. (“The Crystal Goblet or Printing Should Be Invisible” is Beatrice Warde’s classic, endlessly referenced 1930s essay on typography.)

The Book Club of California

Before the talk, we were allowed the privilege of paging through examples of Warde's work from Loxley's collection. One of those was *Persephone* by John Drinkwater. It was designed by Bruce Rogers and published by William Edwin Rudge in 1926, and in it Arrighi italic type makes its first appearance.

Loxley's talk entitled "Frederic Warde: The Gatsby of Type" was read at a very brisk, British-accented pace with few accompanying slides. Within the talk was a telling quote about Warde by Rudolph Ruzicka in a letter to Paul Bennett written on August 26, 1963: "As to Warde, I should say he was an exquisite enigma. It would be easier to write a novel than a biography about him." (Ruzicka [1883 – 1978] was a Czech-born American wood engraver, type designer, and designer of books. He worked as designer and consultant to the Mergenthaler Linotype Company for fifty years and also designed typefaces and wood-engraved illustrations for Daniel Berkeley Updike's Merrymount Press. Paul A. Bennett was the director of Mergenthaler.)

By Loxley's account, he found a surprisingly large body of documentation to piece together Warde's activities despite the many false trails Warde laid about his personal history during the "interwar" years. Apparently, Warde's output was maintained, sometimes erratically, against the backdrop of the mercurial, fragmented professional and personal life he pursued. It was a peripatetic, rollercoaster career that saw him come into contact with most of the leading players in his field, both in Europe and America. He was notorious for being difficult, if not impossible, to work with. His partnership with Stanley Morrison, British Monotype Company's typographical advisor, was rancorous and short-lived. There were no fond anecdotes recounted by fellow professionals; reminiscences of former associates ranged from slightly bemused to openly hostile.

In the introduction to his book *Printer's Devil*, Loxley writes of Warde, "He was a shadowy figure," and "a gifted, self-destructive burn-out . . . [an] ambitious failure" whose "aspirations immolated on the pyre of personality defects." He continues, "I gradually developed not only respect for Warde's devotion and commitment to his craft, but also love for much of his substantial body of work."

One would do well to order a copy of Loxley's book *Printer's Devil: the life and work of Frederic Warde* and delve into the shadowy details of the life of this quixotic enigma — if you haven't already.

Quarterly News-Letter

Ward Ritchie: An Appreciation

by Edward R. Bosley III*

A VARIATION OF REMARKS given at the opening of the Book Club of California's exhibition, *A Circle of Friends: Ward Ritchie, Lawrence Clark Powell, and Gloria Stuart*, on view January 26-May 4, 2015.

When allowed to mature with compassionate oversight and forbearance, our personal libraries, like our children, can become enlightening companions and uncanny reflections of ourselves. I was five years old when my father died, and as a young boy I took his library for granted. The books were simply there, mysterious titles and attractive bindings staring at me from the shelves. For reasons I never fully understood, my mother provided only scant verbal sketches of the man I did not get to know well during our short time together. Nor did I did not ask too many questions at first. There were photos, of course, and some mostly flattering impressions passed along by our parents' friends, but my sister and I were too young to read between the lines or comprehend the entire significance of these related memories. We were left to create internal portraits of the man who was our dad. The excellent exhibition, *A Circle of Friends: Ward Ritchie, Lawrence Clark Powell, and Gloria Stuart*, organized by the Book Club's remarkable librarian, Henry L. Snyder has prompted this appreciation of Ward Ritchie, whom I scarcely knew but whose books revealed to me much about my father, and ultimately about myself. Let me explain.

When our mother did occasionally tell stories about our father, even as a young child I noticed that those told with the lustiest enthusiasm were invariably the ones that involved someone named Ward Ritchie. Another name, Al Sperisen, also figured into these tales, always laced with broad hoots of laughter. Neither name carried any weight at my young age, or at least not until I began to wonder about all the books. And there were many shelves of them. In the "Red Room," as we called it, there were built-in bookshelves from the floor to the high crown molding across our tall-ceilinged, three-story Victorian in San Francisco. Books occupied the living room, the hallway, the four bedrooms, the basement, and even the closets — indeed, they were everywhere. At about the age of fourteen my curiosity got the better of me. I started

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The Book Club of California

to pull volumes off the shelf for examination and almost immediately noticed that name, Ward Ritchie, popping off title pages as printer or designer more often than seemed normal. Who was this person whose ubiquitous books advertised his name? And who was Al Sperisen, and why were their stories connected and so darned funny, anyway?

In the late 1940s, before they were married, my father, Edward “Bud” Bosley, Jr., and his spouse-to-be, Phyllis Jones, worked in the Los Angeles office of the Foote, Cone & Belding advertising agency (FCB) alongside Ward Ritchie. Ritchie was manager of the print production department, Phyllis Jones worked on the Sunkist account, and Edward “Bud” Bosley, Jr. wrote copy. In they fell with Ward Ritchie and his off-hours crowd of printers, bookish people, and other creative souls, no doubt over a few of Ritchie’s famous martinis. To hear my mother describe it, working and playing with Ward was the most fun anyone could have while getting paid.

A story told to me decades later by Ward himself painted a memorable picture of the unorthodox times these people got up to. It begins with a well-lubricated evening at the Foote, Cone & Belding Christmas party in Los Angeles. Ward and his then-girlfriend (he being between wives at the time), with Bud Bosley and Phyllis Jones, who were becoming an item, collectively decided it would be brilliant to prolong the party by flying to San Francisco to catch the rump end of the FCB festivities there. Grabbing a few bottles of booze to continue the revelry and pay the cab driver, they got themselves to Los Angeles Airport and boarded as standby passengers on an otherwise full DC-3. It was in the days, Ward swore, when you could fly as a straphanger if all seats were taken. (Can this be true?) The DC-3 being a “tail-dragger,” passengers sat at a noticeable slant even before takeoff, he explained, and the angle became more acute during ascent. For what seemed like forever, he continued, the four jolly adventurers hung on for dear life, their feet dangling helplessly and their bodies nearly horizontal. The evening’s intemperance no doubt underscored their sensation of being so oddly adrift. Landing in San Francisco the group found the FCB party nearly over. (Two unmarried couples with no baggage encountered some difficulty finding a hotel that would admit them.) Such antics were apparently common judging by the way my mother laughed herself nearly to tears whenever she recalled an outing involving Ward Ritchie. Ward left Foote, Cone & Belding in 1950 to recommit himself to printing full-time, and I’m sure my parents, who married later that year, sorely missed his daily rounds at the office.

Quarterly News-Letter

Many of the books I pored over at home after my father's death in 1959 were either printed or designed by Ritchie, so many that it seems inescapable to credit him for firing my parents' interest in fine printing. In my sleuthing, publication dates revealed that my father began collecting the better books in 1947. In 1952 my sister, Kathy, was born in Los Angeles and the following year our father was transferred to the San Francisco office of FCB to help run the fledgling television department there. Al Sperisen, who also worked in various capacities at FCB, apparently took up where Ward Ritchie had left off nurturing Bud Bosley's interest in fine printing. Al Sperisen encouraged him to become involved with the Book Club of California, sponsoring him for membership in 1954, the year I was born. In the late 1960s and early '70s I began a more or less careful reading of the issues of the *Quarterly News-Letter* that had arrived during my father's five short years of membership as well as the keepsakes published by the Club in that era. This was part of my early education when I probably should have been reading Dante, or at least *The Hobbit*. I was interested to discover, for example, that my dad had written Number 12 in the Book Club of California's 1953 Annual Keepsake, *Pictorial Humor of the Gold Rush*, edited by Carl I. Wheat. At about that time, Limited Editions

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The Book Club of California

Club volumes began to arrive on our doorstep. “Our” number was 961, I later learned, when by the age of ten I was prone to checking all books for colophons. By fourteen or so I began reading some of the more titillating selections such as R. L. Stevenson’s *The Beach of Falesá*, which had almost enough bare-breasted women for a boy that age, skillfully illustrated, I judged, by Millard Sheets. The design and printing were by Ward Ritchie. Him again. *Ugly Duckling* by George Smedly Smith and Bernard Szold, illustrated by Cas Duchow, was another attractive spine that called out to me from its perch. Designed and printed at the Ward Ritchie Press in 1947, it was the earliest connection I could find between the designer and my father. I was driven to more, but it never occurred to me in those days to try to contact the great man himself.

From the 1960s into the 1990s my mother, Phyllis Bosley, worked as office manager at Gregory & Falk Lithographic in San Francisco, remaining close to the graphic arts and continuing some of the associations begun by my father, who undoubtedly would have become an even greater patron of fine-press printing had he lived beyond the age of forty-seven. And despite limited resources, my mother continued to collect in a similar vein as before.

When I moved from San Francisco to Pasadena in 1990, with my mother’s encouragement and blessing I brought many of my father’s books with me. I joined the Book Club of California, Al Sperisen graciously agreeing to be my sponsor thirty-six years after he had done the same for my father. When Al and I finally met in the Club’s library it was as long-lost friends. It was about then that I also felt emboldened to pick up the phone and connect with the other man whose printed name and joyous associations with my parents had been in my ken since childhood. It was a great privilege to meet Ward Ritchie at last and to hear the stories that would bring me to a closer understanding of my mother and father. My mother came south to visit in 1992, and it was a fine thing to see her and Ward reunite after many years, over lunch and martinis. Ward died in 1996 and so I would only know him personally for about as long as I knew my living father. In truth, I have come to know my father through his books, and through Ward Ritchie. In continuing to collect and read what my father loved, what I came to love, I realize that this is also how I have come to know myself.

Quarterly News-Letter

A Bookman's Farewell: Richard Hilkert, 1928-2014

by Bo Wreden*

A Canton, Ohio native, Richard graduated from Brown University and earned his Master's at the University of Arizona with a dissertation on English poet George Wither. A doctoral candidate at Stanford, he studied under Yvor Winters, but left for San Francisco in 1954 to work at the Bank of California. In 1967, asked to help out at Spectrum Books during the Christmas season, Richard found his métier. He worked for other booksellers, Charlotte Newbegin among them, before opening his own shop on Pacific Avenue in Jackson Square where he catered to the interior design trade. Opening on the Ides of March in 1981, he made his first sale on April Fool's Day. Two years later he moved his shop to 333 Hayes Street where his business grew and thrived for eighteen years.

Richard offered personalized service to his clients, special-ordering books and searching for out-of-print titles. He became known for promoting books on local subjects and by local writers. His first author event, featuring Herbert Gold, took place on Pacific Avenue on a rainy evening. The roof leaked, but the event went on with Gold signing books under a large umbrella. Many events were held at larger venues, such as the John Pence Gallery on Post Street where he gave a 1989 publication party for Jessica Mitford. Richard supplied books for the annual Summer Symposiums of Fr. William Monihan of the University of San Francisco and he joined local bibliophilic groups, serving on the Board of Directors of both the Book Club of California and the Gleeson Library Associates at the University of San Francisco.

Richard not only sold books, he also collected them. He cultivated and collected friends as well, getting visitors to sign his guest book and offering a sherry, or an occasional Scotch, to many. At the Book Club Richard became friends with Oscar Lewis. Together they edited the 1984 keepsake series, *Breadbasket of the World, California's Great Wheat-Growing Era: 1860-1890*. In later years Richard organized small birthday luncheons at the Hayes Street Grill for Oscar. Kevin Starr, who often attended, has acknowledged Richard for them. Following Oscar's 99th birthday on May 5, 1992, Richard arranged for photographer Jock McDonald to take Oscar's portrait, the last before his death, July 11, 1992.

*Bo Wreden worked in the antiquarian book trade for many years and was one of Richard Hilkert's many friends.

The Book Club of California

In 2010 Richard gave that portrait to the Club. Thirty-one friends also signed a special broadside saluting Oscar's 99th. It is one of several items Richard bequeathed to the Club and that his niece, Janice Hilkert, gave to it after Richard's death in October.

After twenty years in business, Richard determined to close his shop. He wrote a brief, charming account of his career, *A Bookman's Farewell*, printed as a keepsake by the Yolla Bolly Press and, in October 2001, the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a story, "Beloved bookseller Hilkert closing shop." After closing, Richard remained active in the Gleeson Library Associates and the Book Club. Ten years later in 2011, in declining health, he resigned from the Book Club, but continued to enjoy visits from friends, often going out to lunch or dinner. He frequented the Balboa Cafe where staff knew without asking to bring him a Rob Roy.

He wrote his own obituary, which appeared in the *Chronicle* on October 26, 2014, and left his niece instructions for his memorial service, which took place in the Lady's Chapel of St. Dominic's Church on November 14. Well over one hundred people overflowed the Chapel into church pews behind it. Richard's sister, Sandy McGraw, of Ohio, and her daughter each wore one of Richard's signature bow ties for the service. Many friends, among them Scott Wall, Sue Kubly, and Mike Brassington, contributed to, or participated in the service. A number of Book Club members, including Richard's high school friend Nancy Hoyt, and USF Gleeson Library staff attended. Afterwards at a reception at Florio on Fillmore, Gail Moore ordered a Roby Roy which she passed around for communal sips in Richard's memory. *Chronicle* columnist Leah Garchik, learning of his death, described him as "a dear man, kind and cheery," adding "Richard was, well, civilized and that's a very high compliment."

Book Collector Extraordinaire: Geraldine Kennedy Cole, 1927-2015

by Kathleen Rydar*

Geraldine Kennedy Cole's last visit to the Book Club of California helped celebrate its 100th birthday in December 2012, at the Julia Morgan Ballroom in the Merchants Exchange. Her centrally located table held family and friends, the people she loved, and those who love

*Kathleen Rydar is president of That Man May See, a support organization at UCSF dedicated to saving sight. She is also principal of Il Pavone Press, where she and Carol Cole produced *A Lifetime Chase*, a small letterpress edition of thirty, using nine original early-nineteenth-century woodblocks hand carved by Thomas Bewick, from the collection of Geraldine Cole.

Quarterly News-Letter

books. Gerry's own elegance shone forth that day, and this happy event provides a graceful memory of a stylish and well-read woman.

She and her husband of fifty-nine years, Jerry, were generous supporters, active members, and faithful enthusiasts of the Book Club, which was their haunt every Monday night. "The Jerrys," as they were affectionately known, relished intelligent conversation as well as learning about and honoring printing, paper, and the written word. With regulars like the Coles in attendance, the Monday night gatherings were a convivial guarantee of bringing together like-minded people of the book.

A book collector in her own right, Gerry loved animals, nature, and travel, which led her to the works of British wood engraver Thomas Bewick. Her "lifetime chase" resulted in a carefully cultivated and organized collection of his books and original print blocks. She maintained contact with Bewick collectors throughout the U.S. and Great Britain. She also enjoyed lasting relationships with booksellers near and far, meeting them at book fairs, through her travels, and through their rare book catalogs. She often said that "half the fun of having a collection is the chase and people you meet along the way." The Book Club exhibited Gerry's Bewicks over the years.

The Coles traveled throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe to explore libraries, view book collections, meet friends old and new, and enjoy many adventures in the world of rare books and fine printing. Their

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The Book Club of California

gracious home on Sixth Avenue was a gathering spot for local as well as traveling book lovers, and all were treated to Gerry's excellent cooking. She possessed a dry wit that made for lively and lifelong friendships. Table conversations with friends and family could go late into the night. There was always a good bottle of wine, books came down from the shelves, and sparkling discussions ensued.

Gerry's interest in books took off with the Gleeson Library Associates (GLA) at the University of San Francisco, headed by Father Bill Monihan in the 1970s. She helped raise funds to create the Donohue Rare Book Room and was an active member and past president of the GLA. As her book interests expanded, Gerry became a devoted member of the Roxburghe Club, Colophon Club, Grolier Club, Book Club of California, Friends of The Bancroft Library, San Francisco Center for the Book, and Town and Country Club. Her generosity extended widely as she encouraged others to develop their own collecting interests and their various pursuits. Her enthusiasm for their budding efforts frequently guided them to significant accomplishments.

A native of San Francisco, Gerry was born to Gerald D. and Helen Weber Kennedy, and was a direct descendant of early California pioneer families. Her great-grandfather, Captain Charles Weber, was the founder of Stockton. Her mother also was a longtime Book Club of California member and avid collector.

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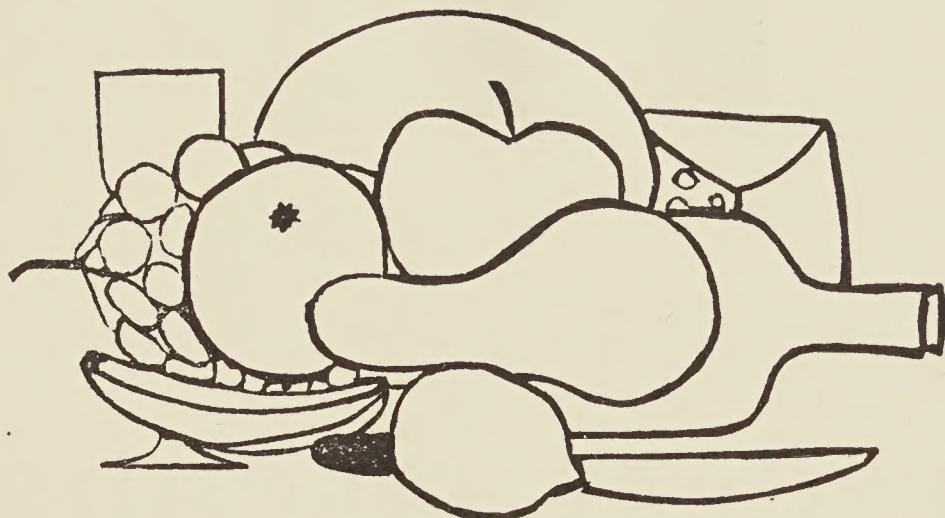
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Quarterly News-Letter

Gerry was the youngest of four Kennedy sisters. Her siblings were Peggy Cahill, Katherine Cookson, and Moira Holden. She was a loving mother to Jeremy, Christopher, Carol, and Sarah. She treasured her seven grandchildren, happily supplying them with books for all occasions. She purchased for each the first edition Harry Potter books, not knowing the sensation these would become. The grandchildren, now young adults, still cherish those hallowed books, and Gerry left this earth pleased that her legacy of fine books and collecting has spilled over into the next generations.



STILL LIFE from *Specimen Sheet and Price List of the World's Finest Printing Inks*, the Peregrine Press, 1957.

New Members

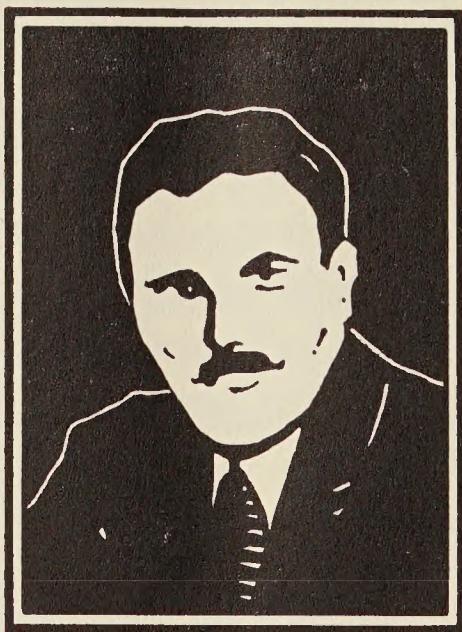
REGULAR

John Blew	Chicago, IL
Sara Burke	San Francisco
Meredith Eliassen	San Francisco
Margaret Harrington	Mill Valley
Klaus Lange	Emeryville
Russell Miller	San Francisco
Matthew Morgan	San Francisco
Mark Mueller	Richmond
Isaac Schott-Rosenfield	San Francisco
Victoria Shoemaker	Oakland

SUSTAINING

Edward Yorkgitis	Millersville, MD
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The Book Club of California



CONGRATULATES THE RECIPIENTS OF
the 2015 Oscar Lewis Awards:

DR. GRAY BRECHIN

FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO WESTERN HISTORY

HARRY & SANDRA REESE

FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BOOK ARTS

Thank you to all who joined us to celebrate on March 30, 2015!

Dr. GRAY BRECHIN is an historical geographer whose chief interests are the state of California, the environmental impact of cities upon their hinterlands, and the invisible landscape of New Deal public works. Perhaps best known for his book *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin*, now a classic of urban studies, he is also a frequent public lecturer and radio and television guest, a visiting scholar in the UC Berkeley Department of Geography, and founder and project scholar of the Living New Deal Project.

HARRY AND SANDRA REESE are a printer and book artist team. Proprietors of Turkey Press, founded by Harry in 1974, they produce exquisite books of contemporary poetry, printed letterpress and combined with original art. In 1990 they founded Edition Reese to create limited editions in collaboration with various artists, writers, and thinkers. Their work has been exhibited and is housed in collections worldwide, and Harry Reese directs the Book Arts program in the UC Santa Barbara College of Creative Studies, which he established in 1985.

The Book Club of California established the Oscar Lewis Awards in 1994 in honor of the prolific and popular San Francisco writer-historian who served as Book Club secretary from 1921 to 1946. For more about the Oscar Lewis Awards, including a list of past recipients, please visit

www.bccbooks.org/programs/awards